A Course in Language Teaching

Practice and theory

Penny Ur

CAMBRIDGE TEACHER TRAINING
AND DEVELOPMENT
Series Editors: Marion Williams and Tony Wright

Contents

Units with a ▶ symbol are components of the 'core' course; those with a ▷ symbol are 'optional'.

Acknowledgements ix

Read this first: To the (trainee) teacher xi
To the trainer xii

Introduction 1

Part I ***The teaching process*** 10

Module 1: Presentations and explanations
▶ Unit One: Effective presentation 11
▷ Unit Two: Examples of presentation procedures 13
▶ Unit Three: Explanations and instructions 16

Module 2: Practice activities
▶ Unit One: The function of practice 19
▶ Unit Two: Characteristics of a good practice activity 21
▶ Unit Three: Practice techniques 24
▷ Unit Four: Sequence and progression in practice 27

Module 3: Tests
▶ Unit One: What are tests for? 33
▶ Unit Two: Basic concepts; the test experience 35
▶ Unit Three: Types of test elicitation techniques 37
▷ Unit Four: Designing a test 41
▷ Unit Five: Test administration 42

Part II ***Teaching the language (1): The 'what'*** 46

Module 4: Teaching Pronunciation
▶ Unit One: What does teaching pronunciation involve? 47
▷ Unit Two: Listening to accents 50
▶ Unit Three: Improving learners' pronunciation 52
▷ Unit Four: Further topics for discussion 54
▶ Unit Five: Pronunciation and spelling 56

Module 5: Teaching vocabulary

▶ Unit One: What is vocabulary and what needs to be taught? 60
▶ Unit Two: Presenting new vocabulary 63
▷ Unit Three: Remembering vocabulary 64
▶ Unit Four: Ideas for vocabulary work in the classroom 68
▷ Unit Five: Testing vocabulary 69

Module 6: Teaching grammar

▶ Unit One: What is grammar? 75
▷ Unit Two: The place of grammar teaching 76
▷ Unit Three: Grammatical terms 78
▶ Unit Four: Presenting and explaining grammar 81
▶ Unit Five: Grammar practice activities 83
▷ Unit Six: Grammatical mistakes 85

Module 7: Topics, situations, notions, functions

▶ Unit One: Topics and situations 90
▶ Unit Two: What ARE notions and functions? 92
▶ Unit Three: Teaching chunks of language: from text to task 93
▷ Unit Four: Teaching chunks of language: from task to text 96
▷ Unit Five: Combining different kinds of language segments 98

Part III ***Teaching the language (2): The 'how'*** 103

Module 8: Teaching listening

▶ Unit One: What does real-life listening involve? 105
▶ Unit Two: Real-life listening in the classroom 107
▷ Unit Three: Learner problems 111
▶ Unit Four: Types of activities 112
▷ Unit Five: Adapting activities 115

Module 9: Teaching speaking

▶ Unit One: Successful oral fluency practice 120
▶ Unit Two: The functions of topic and task 122
▶ Unit Three: Discussion activities 124
▷ Unit Four: Other kinds of spoken interaction 129
▷ Unit Five: Role play and related techniques 131
▷ Unit Six: Oral testing 133

Module 10: Teaching reading

▶ Unit One: How do we read? 138
▷ Unit Two: Beginning reading 141
▶ Unit Three: Types of reading activities 143
▶ Unit Four: Improving reading skills 147
▷ Unit Five: Advanced reading 150

Module 11: Teaching writing
▷ Unit One: Written versus spoken text 159
▶ Unit Two: Teaching procedures 162
▶ Unit Three: Tasks that stimulate writing 164
▷ Unit Four: The process of composition 167
▶ Unit Five: Giving feedback on writing 170

Part IV Course content 175

Module 12: The syllabus
▶ Unit One: What is a syllabus? 176
▶ Unit Two: Different types of language syllabus 177
▶ Unit Three: Using the syllabus 179

Module 13: Materials
▶ Unit One: How necessary is a coursebook? 183
▶ Unit Two: Coursebook assessment 184
▶ Unit Three: Using a coursebook 187
▷ Unit Four: Supplementary materials 189
▷ Unit Five: Teacher-made worksheets and workcards 192

Module 14: Topic content
▶ Unit One: Different kinds of content 197
▶ Unit Two: Underlying messages 199
▷ Unit Three: Literature (1): should it be included in the course? 200
▶ Unit Four: Literature (2): teaching ideas 202
▷ Unit Five: Literature (3): teaching a specific text 206

Part IV Lessons 212

Module 15: Lesson planning
▶ Unit One: What does a lesson involve? 213
▷ Unit Two: Lesson preparation 215
▶ Unit Three: Varying lesson components 216
▷ Unit Four: Evaluating lesson effectiveness 219
▶ Unit Five: Practical lesson management 222

Module 16: Classroom interaction
▶ Unit One: Patterns of classroom interaction 227
▶ Unit Two: Questioning 229
▶ Unit Three: Group work 232
▶ Unit Four: Individualization 233
▷ Unit Five: The selection of appropriate activation techniques 237

Module 17: Giving feedback
▶ Unit One: Different approaches to the nature and function of feedback 242

▷ Unit Two: Assessment 244
▶ Unit Three: Correcting mistakes in oral work 246
▶ Unit Four: Written feedback 250
▷ Unit Five: Clarifying personal attitudes 253

Module 18: Classroom discipline
▶ Unit One: What is discipline? 259
▶ Unit Two: What does a disciplined classroom look like? 260
▷ Unit Three: What teacher action is conducive to a disciplined classroom? 262
▶ Unit Four: Dealing with discipline problems 264
▷ Unit Five: Discipline problems: episodes 267

Part VI ***Learner differences*** 273

Module 19: Learner motivation and interest
▷ Unit One: Motivation: some background thinking 274
▷ Unit Two: The teacher's responsibility 276
▶ Unit Three: Extrinsic motivation 277
▶ Unit Four: Intrinsic motivation and interest 280
▷ Unit Five: Fluctuations in learner interest 282

Module 20: Younger and older learners
▶ Unit One: What difference does age make to language learning? 286
▷ Unit Two: Teaching children 288
▷ Unit Three: Teaching adolescents: student preferences 290
▷ Unit Four: Teaching adults: a different relationship 294

Module 21: Large heterogeneous classes
▶ Unit One: Defining terms 302
▶ Unit Two: Problems and advantages 303
▶ Unit Three: Teaching strategies (1): compulsory + optional 307
▶ Unit Four: Teaching strategies (2): open-ending 309
▷ Unit Five: Designing your own activities 312

Part VII ***And beyond*** 317

Module 22: And beyond
▷ Unit One: Teacher development: practice, reflection, sharing 318
▷ Unit Two: Teacher appraisal 322
▷ Unit Three: Advancing further (1): intake 324
▷ Unit Four: Advancing further (2): output 327

Trainer's notes 333

Bibliography 360

Index 367